

2001 budget by \$1 billion—the largest Head Start expansion in history.

It is also our responsibility to ensure that our children feel part of a safe, strong, nurturing community. Through our Safe Schools/Healthy Students initiative, my Administration is helping parents, school principals, police, and mental health providers to collaborate on local solutions to school and youth violence. My proposed budget for fiscal 2001 includes an increase of more than \$100 million for this program. I have also called on the Congress to allow eligible workers under the Family and Medical Leave Act to take up to 24 hours of additional leave each year to meet family obligations, including school activities such as parent-teacher conferences. America is enjoying a period of unprecedented economic success today; but we will never be truly successful as a Nation until we ensure that all families have the tools and opportunity they need in order to raise healthy children. To acknowledge the importance of our children's health, the Congress, by joint resolution approved May 18, 1928, as amended (36 U.S.C. 105), has called for the designation of the first Monday in October as "Child Health Day" and has requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this day.

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Monday, October 2, 2000, as Child Health Day. I call upon families, schools, communities, and governments to dedicate themselves to promoting and protecting the health and well-being of all our children.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-ninth day of September, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fifth.

**William J. Clinton**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., October 3, 2000]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 30, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on October 4.

## **The President's Radio Address**

*September 30, 2000*

Good morning. This has been a good week for America. As our athletes continue to pile up medals in Sydney, our economy continues to break records at home. This week we learned that household income had reached an all-time high, poverty a 20-year low; the budget surplus is the largest on record; and for the first time in 12 years, thanks largely to the Children's Health Insurance Program, the number of Americans without health insurance has declined by over 1½ million.

Today I want to talk with you about making the most of this moment, by putting our children's education first and building better schools for them.

This fall our schools opened their doors to the largest number of students in history. We have to work hard to give them the best education in history. We're working to turn our schools around, with higher standards, stronger accountability, and more investment. Reading, math, and SAT scores are up. So are high school graduation and college-going rates. We dramatically increased Head Start, after-school, and summer school programs. The number of students in States with core curriculum standards has increased from 14 to 49, and in State after State, failing schools are being turned around.

With the Vice President's E-rate program, we've helped connect 95 percent of our schools to the Internet, and we're in the process of hiring 100,000 high-quality teachers to reduce class size in the early grades.

But it's hard for students to lift themselves up in schools that are falling down. Across our Nation, students are struggling to learn in schools that are crowded and crumbling. I visited schools all over the country where this is so: a school in Florida where classes were held not in one or two but 12 trailers; a school in Queens, where there were 400 more students than the school was built for; a school in Virginia, where the electrical service in some classrooms is so poor that if you plug in a new computer in the wall, the circuit breaker cuts off.

This is a challenge all across our country, in cities and rural areas, small towns and Native American communities. The average

American school building is now more than 40 years old. The estimated price tag to bring our schools into good condition—\$127 billion.

Today I'm releasing a new Department of Education analysis that highlights the nationwide need to build new schools and modernize existing ones. The study provides a State-by-State report card that shows that at least 60 percent of the schools in every State are in need of repair. Many States and local communities are working to fix their schools, but too many school districts simply don't have the tax base to handle the burden alone.

That's why I've proposed a school construction tax credit to help communities build or modernize 6,000 schools and, also, grants and loans for emergency repairs in nearly 5,000 schools a year for 5 years.

The good news is, we have a bipartisan majority in the House of Representatives ready right now to pass school construction relief. But the Republican leadership continues to stand in the way and refuses to bring it to a vote. Every day they stall is another day our children are forced to go to school in trailers, overcrowded classrooms, and crumbling buildings. Congress must act now.

In a larger sense, this is about our priorities and values. The schools I attended as a child were fairly old, but they were very well-maintained. They sent every student a clear message: You are important; we take your education seriously. That's how my parents' generation kept faith with us and how we must keep faith with our children.

But the clock is ticking. At midnight tonight the fiscal year runs out. Congress still hasn't sent me a budget for education and other pressing priorities. Yet, they have found the time, first, to pass huge, fiscally irresponsible tax cuts and then, after I vetoed them, to load up the spending bills with hundreds of millions of dollars in special interest projects. In one appropriations bill alone, there is \$668 million in extra projects. That's enough to do emergency repairs in 2,500 schools, to send another one million children to after-school programs, to hire over 15,000 teachers to lower class size.

Not long ago, Senator McCain said, pork barrel spending, and I quote, "has lurched

completely out of control." Well, it's time to turn off the pork barrel spigot and deliver for our children's future.

That's why I've told my budget team to seek final negotiations on an education budget that stays true to our values and our children's long-term needs. We're not going to leave the table until we invest in modernizing our schools and continue our efforts to hire 100,000 quality teachers for smaller classes. We're going to keep fighting to strengthen accountability, to turn around failing schools or shut them down or put them under new management, to expand after-school programs and college opportunities for young people, and to ensure a qualified teacher in every classroom.

Our children deserve 21st century schools. In this time of prosperity, we have a responsibility to make sure they get no less. By building stronger schools, we'll build a stronger America in the future.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:48 p.m. on September 29 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on September 30. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 29 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

## **Proclamation 7348—National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, 2000**

*September 29, 2000*

*By the President of the United States of America*

### **A Proclamation**

Domestic violence transcends all ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic boundaries. Its perpetrators abuse their victims both physically and mentally, and the effects of their attacks are far-reaching—weakening the very core of our communities. Domestic violence is particularly devastating because it so often occurs in the privacy of the home, which is meant to be a place of shelter and security. During the month of October, all Americans should contemplate the scars that domestic violence leaves on our society and what each of us can do to prevent it.